

**NEVADA STATE WELFARE DIVISION
PUBLIC HEARING TO ADOPT REGULATIONS**

The Public Hearing to Adopt Regulations was brought to order by Nancy K. Ford, Welfare Administrator, at 10:10 a.m. on Tuesday, June 29, 2004. This meeting was conference-called between the Welfare Division Central Office, 1470 East College Parkway, Room #109, Carson City, Nevada and the Special Children's Clinic, 3811 W. Charleston, Suite 209, Las Vegas, Nevada.

STAFF PRESENT

Nancy Ford, Administrator
Gary Stagliano, Deputy Administrator
Leslie Danihel, Chief, Eligibility & Payments
Sharon Vail, Employee Development Manager
Janice Stenson, Medicaid Program Specialist
Roseann Denzler, Accountant
Louise Bush, Staff Specialist
Lynette Giles, Executive Assistant
Rick Fambrini, Administrative Assistant
Amanda Aseph, Administrative Assistant
Laurie Buck, Deputy Attorney General

GUESTS PRESENT

Connie Anderson, Medicaid Services, Division of Health Care Financing & Policy
Harry Snoek, Program Specialist, Division of Health Care Financing & Policy
Becky Van Auleen, CART Provider

Ms. Ford opened the public hearing at 10:10 a.m. She explained this public hearing is being conference-called between the Welfare Division's Central Office in Carson City and the Special Children's Clinic in Las Vegas due to technical difficulties with the video-conference equipment. The public hearing has been posted in accordance with the open meeting law. Ms. Ford explained the three regulations being heard at this public hearing.

I. MEDICAID POLICY:

Leslie Danihel explained the proposed amendment will provide Medicaid coverage to working individuals with disabilities who, because of earnings, do not qualify for Medicaid under any other category. This program will be known as the Health Insurance for Work Advancement (HIWA) Program and is scheduled to become effective on July 1, 2004. She reviewed the eligibility criteria and the two-tiered premium payment schedule for this program. Ms. Ford said there is no public in attendance in the North, but Ms. Danihel read Jon Sasser, Legal Services Statewide Legal Advocacy Coordinator's, testimony on this agenda item into the record:

"I applaud the Division's adoption of the HIWA program. It is the fruition of much hard work by many. While I would ideally like the unearned income limit to be higher than \$599 a month, it is my understanding that for now the limit is needed due to budgetary constraints. I ask that the caseload be closely monitored with an eye toward increasing the limit if it proves to be a major barrier toward participation. I did not spot any needed changes, so unless Paul Gowins or others who worked on the advisory committee see an issue, I recommend adoption."

Ms. Danihel read a comment from Jan Gilbert, PLAN, which stated she supports the Medicaid buy-in option for the disabled.

No comments from either the north and south.

Hearing no comments, Ms. Ford adopted the amendment on behalf of the Director of the Department of Human Resources, effective July 1, 2004.

II. MEDICAID POLICY:

Ms. Danihel reviewed the proposed amendment which will include income and needs of a spouse when determining eligibility for Medicare Beneficiary categories, as required by the federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMMS). She reviewed the new CMMS policy that must be adopted, as it is a new federal regulation. Ms. Ford stated this change is required by CMMS and recognizes it will help some families but hurt others.

Ms. Danihel read Mr. Sasser's testimony into the record:

"Since you state that CMS is requiring that the income and needs of a spouse be included for QMBs, I take no position on this issue."

Hearing no further comments, Ms. Ford adopted the amendment on behalf of the Director of the Department of Human Resources effective July 1, 2004.

III. MEDICAID POLICY:

Ms. Danihel stated the proposed amendment will remove the assets test from the Child Health Assurance Program (CHAP). This program provides Medicaid coverage to children and pregnant women not covered under other Medicaid categories. Income limits will be tracked in order to report the impact of this change to the Legislature.

Ms. Danihel read Mr. Sasser's comments into the record:

"I also applaud the Division's elimination of the CHAP assets test. This too has been long awaited by many. As Chair of the Advocacy Committee for the Nevada Covering Kids and Families Coalition, we are pleased to see this barrier to coverage for children, which we have sought to eliminate for at least 6 years, finally come down. We hope that it also provides some relief for your overworked staff."

Ms. Danihel then read Jan Gilbert's comments of support of the CHAP assets test elimination into the record.

Hearing no further comments, Ms. Ford adopted the amendment on behalf of the Director of the Department of Human Resources, effective July 1, 2004.

IV. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None received.

Ms. Ford thanked everyone for their participation and attending this public hearing. Hearing no further comments, she closed the public hearing at 10:20 a.m.